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021132Z Mar 01

CONFIDENTIAL PTO6903

PAGE 01 HARARE 00897 01 OF 02 070830Z
ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	COR-01	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00
	SMEC-00	USNW-00	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00
	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01
	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00

/011W

-----CEA125 071115Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8335
INFO NSC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 000897

SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR AF/S, AF/PD (COX, HOWARD, SANDERS)

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER
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PAGE 02 HARARE 00897 01 OF 02 070830Z

LONDON FOR GURNEY

PARIS FOR WILLIAMS

PASS USAID FOR AFR/SA C. PALMA

NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/13/11

TAGS: PHUM PGOV KPAO PINS PINR KDEM ZI

SUBJECT: GREATER SOPHISTICATION AND THOROUGHNESS
CHARACTERIZE GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN AGAINST INDEPENDENT
MEDIA

CLASSIFIED BY PAO D. BRUCE WHARTON FOR REASONS 1.5B AND D.

SUMMARY

11. (C) IN ITS INTENSIFYING EFFORT TO CONTROL INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC, THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUED TO HARDEN ITS APPROACH TOWARD THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA. THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE (GOZ) IS PURSUING A TWO-PRONGED APPROACH: CAREFUL CONTROL OF THE CONTENT AND "SPIN" OF NEWS REPORTED BY THE STATE-OWNED MEDIA; AND CONSTANT CHALLENGES TO THE INDEPENDENT AND FOREIGN MEDIA'S ABILITY TO WORK. BEHIND-THE-SCENES EFFORTS BY THE STATE-OWNED AND THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA CONTINUE AS BOTH SIDES JOCKEY TO STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITIONS. THE GOZ
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PAGE 03 HARARE 00897 01 OF 02 070830Z
CONTINUES TO PURSUE ITS AUTHORITARIAN INCLINATIONS WHILE THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA CONTINUE TO SHOW COURAGE AND TENACITY. END SUMMARY.

GOVERNMENT SYMPATHIZER ANNOUNCES NEW DAILY PAPER

12. (C) THE WEEKLY "MIRROR" ANNOUNCED IN ITS FEBRUARY 23 EDITION THAT IT WOULD LAUNCH "THE DAILY MIRROR" ON MAY 11. "THE MIRROR" IS PUBLISHED BY PROFESSOR IBBO MANDAZA, A ZIMBABWEAN POLITICAL SCIENTIST AND DIRECTOR OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN POLITICAL ECONOMY SERIES (SAPES) TRUST, A HARARE-BASED POLITICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTION. THE PUBLISHER IS PRACTICED IN THE ART OF DECEPTION. ALTHOUGH MANDAZA DENIES THAT "THE MIRROR" SUPPORTS THE GOVERNMENT AND ZANU-PF, EDITORIALS, THE WEEKLY ANONYMOUS "SCRUTATOR" COLUMN (WRITTEN BY MANDAZA) AND EDITORIAL DECISIONS LEAVE LITTLE DOUBT OF THE NEWSPAPER'S POLITICAL ORIENTATION. "THE MIRROR'S" TARGET AUDIENCE IS EDUCATED, URBAN ZIMBABWEANS. "THE MIRROR" CLAIMS CIRCULATION OF ABOUT 20,000 PER WEEK (PROBABLY

OPTIMISTIC), AND CONTAINS VERY LITTLE ADVERTISING. SINCE ITS LAUNCH IN EARLY 1999, ITS ABILITY TO SURVIVE FINANCIALLY HAS BEEN SOMETHING OF A MYSTERY. THE PAPER INITIALLY RECEIVED SOME SUPPORT FROM THE SOUTHERN AFRICA MEDIA DEVELOPMENT FUND (SAMDEF), BUT WAS TURNED DOWN IN 2000 FOR FUNDING FOR A DAILY PAPER. SPECULATION IN HARARE IS THAT "THE MIRROR'S" OPERATING COSTS ARE SUBSIDIZED BY SAPE'S REVENUES AND THROUGH FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM ZANU-PF. IF "THE DAILY MIRROR" DOES APPEAR
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PAGE 04 HARARE 00897 01 OF 02 070830Z
AS ADVERTISED ON MAY 1, IT WILL OFFER A MORE SOPHISTICATED COUNTERPART TO THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED DAILY "THE HERALD." IT WILL ALSO BE SOMETHING OF A FINANCIAL WONDER, THE ZIMBABWEAN MEDIA EQUIVALENT OF THE MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES AND FISH.

TIGHTENING ACCREDITATION OF FOREIGN JOURNALISTS

13. (C) THE JOHANNESBURG-BASED REGIONAL CORRESPONDENT FOR THE "WASHINGTON POST," JON JETER, TOLD US THAT HE ENCOUNTERED A NEWLY CUMBERSOME PROCESS FOR GAINING A PRESS CREDENTIAL IN ZIMBABWE. SINCE JUNE 2000 THE PROCESS HAS BEEN SIMPLE AND FAST, IF SOMEWHAT EXPENSIVE. IN THE PAST, FOREIGN JOURNALISTS SIMPLY HAD TO GO TO THE INFORMATION MINISTRY, PRODUCE A PHOTO ID AND LETTER FROM THEIR EMPLOYER, PAY (U.S.) \$100 (IN US CURRENCY, PLEASE), AND WERE ISSUED A WORK PERMIT ON THE SPOT. THAT PERMIT WAS GOOD FOR UP TO 3 MONTHS. UPON ARRIVAL IN HARARE ON FEBRUARY 27, JETER FOUND A MORE COMPLICATED PROCEDURE. HE WAS ASKED TO PROVIDE DETAILS ABOUT THE STORIES HE INTENDED TO FILE, THE PEOPLE HE WANTED TO MEET, AND THE AREAS HE WISHED TO VISIT. HIS PRO-FORMA LETTER FROM THE "WASHINGTON POST" WAS ALSO QUESTIONED AND HE WAS TOLD THAT FOR FUTURE VISITS HE NEEDED TO PROVIDE A MORE SPECIFIC LETTER, ON OFFICIAL COMPANY LETTERHEAD. JETER WAS GIVEN A CREDENTIAL, BUT IT TOOK 24 HOURS INSTEAD OF THE HERETOFORE-USUAL 30 MINUTES. JETER WAS ALSO TOLD BY AN OFFICIAL OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY THAT THE PROCESS WAS LIKELY TO
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PAGE 05 HARARE 00897 01 OF 02 070830Z
BECOME MORE DIFFICULT WHEN NEW REGULATIONS GOVERNING

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL PTO6904

PAGE 01 HARARE 00897 02 OF 02 070831Z
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INFO	LOG-00	COR-01	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 HARARE 000897

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PAGE 02 HARARE 00897 02 OF 02 070831Z

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FOREIGN MEDIA WORK IN ZIMBABWE ARE PUBLISHED. JETER WAS
TOLD THAT TELEVISION CREWS WOULD FIND THE PROCESS
ESPECIALLY TOUGH. JETER'S EXPERIENCE AND THE WARNING OF
TOUGHER NEW ACCREDITATION PROCESSES ARE CONSISTENT WITH
INFORMATION AND PUBLICITY MINISTER MOYO'S STATEMENTS
AFTER THE FEBRUARY EXPULSION OF THE BBC AND "WEEKLY MAIL
AND GUARDIAN" CORRESPONDENTS.

"DAILY NEWS" CLOSE TO ACQUIRING NEW PRINTING PRESS

14. (C) THE "DAILY NEWS," WHICH HAS HEROICALLY PUBLISHED
AN EDITION EVERY DAY SINCE THE JANUARY BOMBING AND
DESTRUCTION OF ITS PRESSES, IS ON THE VERGE OF SIGNING A
CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF A NEW (U.S.)\$4 MILLION
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PAGE 03 HARARE 00897 02 OF 02 070831Z
PRINTING PRESS. PRIVATE DONATIONS AND CORPORATE
FINANCIAL RESOURCES HAVE RAISED ABOUT ONE-HALF OF THE
PURCHASE PRICE. THE BALANCE IS BEING PROVIDED VIA A
LOAN FROM THE SOROS FOUNDATION'S MEDIA DEVELOPMENT ARM,
THE OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATION. DELIVERY AND SET-UP OF THE
PRESS WILL TAKE ABOUT 6 MONTHS FROM THE TIME THE
CONTRACT IS SIGNED. IMPORTATION OF THE PRESS MAY BE A
CHALLENGE IF THERE IS ANY SUBSTANCE BEHIND MINISTER
JONATHAN MOYO'S THREATS TO BAN FOREIGN DONATIONS TO THE
ZIMBABWEAN MEDIA.

ZIMBABWEAN BUSINESSMEN SHORE UP INDEPENDENT MEDIA

15. (C) ZIMBABWE'S TWO MOST SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS,
STRIVE MASIYIWA (ECONET WIRELESS) AND NIGEL CHANAKIRA
(KINGDOM FINANCIAL HOLDINGS) HAVE MADE MAJOR INVESTMENTS
IN THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA. THE TWO HAVE CREATED A
HOLDING COMPANY, THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA GROUP (IMG) THAT
HAS BOUGHT CONTROLLING SHARES IN ASSOCIATED NEWSPAPERS
OF ZIMBABWE (ANZ), THE PARENT COMPANY OF THE "DAILY
NEWS." IMG HAS ALSO BOUGHT LARGE, THOUGH NOT
CONTROLLING AMOUNTS, OF STOCK IN THE "ZIMBABWE
INDEPENDENT" AND THE "STANDARD." THESE ARE IMPORTANT
INVESTMENTS AS THEY PROVIDE A MUCH-NEEDED FINANCIAL
CUSHION TO ALL THREE PAPERS AND BRING THEM INTO THE
ORBIT OF ZIMBABWE'S MOST TALENTED AND SUCCESSFUL
BUSINESSMEN. (NB: BOTH MASIYIWA AND CHANAKIRA WERE
THREATENED BY GOZ-ENGINEERED LAWSUITS IN 2000 WHEN IT
BECAME APPARENT THAT NEITHER OF THE MEN SUPPORTED ZANU-
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PAGE 04 HARARE 00897 02 OF 02 070831Z
PF. SINCE MID-2000 MASIYIWA HAS LIVED IN SOUTH AFRICA,
REPORTEDLY TO AVOID HARASSMENT BY GOVERNMENT OR ZANU-PF
OFFICIALS AND SUPPORTERS. END NB.) IMG'S CREATION
BODES WELL FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE INDEPENDENT MEDIA IN
ZIMBABWE.

IRVING

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